What is Claimed Is:

1.   A method for processing image data, comprising:

obtaining image data;

automatically processing the image data using a set of directives to identify a target object in the image data and process the image data according to a specified protocol; and

automatically generating one or more images of the target object based on one or more of the directives; and

storing the one or more generated images in a digital archive.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the image data comprises DICOM-formatted image data.

3.   The method of claim 2, wherein automatically processing the image data using a set of directives comprises processing meta-data in DICOM fields to identify the target object .

4.   The method of claim 1, wherein automatically processing the image data comprises segmenting the target object using processing parameters specified by one or more of the directives.

5.   An imaging system, comprising:

an image processing module for automatically processing image data using a set of directives to identify a target object in the image data and process the image data according to a specified protocol; and

a rendering module for automatically generating one or more images of the target object based on one or more of the directives; and

a digital archive for storing the one or more generated images.

6.   The system of claim 5, wherein the image data comprises DICOM-formatted image data.

7.   The system of claim 6, wherein the imaging processing module extracts and processes meta-data in DICOM fields of the image data to identify the target object .

8.   The system of claim 5, wherein the image processing module directs a segmentation module to segment the target object using processing parameters specified by one or more of the directives.